THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Generally aircraft utilisation is between 8 to 12 hours depending upon routes operated, turn around time etc.

(b) and (c) During the month of July 2006, 40.99% of the Indian Airlines and Alliance Air flights were delayed and cancelled. This includes 2.85% due to commercial operations, engineering, ground support surface transport, stores related reasons, 2.43% due to inclement weather, airport facilities etc. and the remaining 35.71% due to consequential delays.

(d) All technical delays and cancellations are investigated and remedial action taken immediately. A meeting of the representatives of operating department at the regional level is held every day. At the base station, delays and cancellations are analyzed to identify repetitive nature of snags and special maintenance action is immediately taken. At the Headquarters level, the punctuality of services is monitored on a daily basis. Regular meetings are also held with the vendors or manufacturers for bringing an improvement in the product and systems.

Upgradation of Bagdogra airport

†2572. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal for upgradation of Bagdogra airport into international airport is under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the status of this proposal alongwith the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) There are various requirements like infrastructure and other facilities etc. of international standards available at an airport, commercial viability, traffic potential etc. before declaring the airport as an international airport. Besides, a firm commitment by International/domestic airlines operator to start International flights to/from this airport is also required. At present, no airline operator has yet demanded to operate their flights through Bagdogra airport.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.